

CROSS-OVER

LEGENDS

CHAPTER 19

SUPERMAN & THE NEW GODS

ACTION COMICS

586

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MAR 87

ABOVE THE
BLAZING
FIRE-
PITS...



ORION™
VS.

SUPERMAN... CHAMPION OF APOKOLIPS!

THE
HISTORY
OF THE
DC
UNIVERSE
is must
reading

BY JOHN BYRNE & DICK GIORDANO

BEYOND SPACE,
BEYOND TIME...

A PLACE WHERE THE NARROW
RULES OF MAN ARE BENT
ASIDE, AND GODS REIGN!

HE'S FALLING BEHIND
AGAIN. WHY DOES HE
HESITATE?

ORION!
MAKE HASTE,
MY FRIEND!
THERE'S NOT A
MOMENT TO
LOSE!

YOU'RE TOO QUICK
TO RACE INTO THE
JAWS OF DEATH,
LIGHTRAY.

WHAT MUST
TRANSPIRE AHEAD
WILL AWAIT OUR
COMING, NEVER
FEAR.

WHY SUCH RETICENCE,
ORION? HIGHFATHER
SENT US ON A MISSION
OF MERCY.

WHY DOES
YOUR WARRIOR'S
SOUL WEAKEN
NOW?

IS IT WEAKNESS YOU SEE
IN ME, LIGHTRAY? HOW
OFTEN IN THE PAST YOU'VE
COUNSELLED ME TO LET
GO THE WAYS OF WAR, AND
LEARN TO LAUGH AGAIN.

NOW YOU
CHIDE ME
WHEN I
PAUSE
BEFORE HURL-
ING MYSELF
ONCE MORE
INTO THE
BATTLEFIELD.

I STAND CORRECTED,
ORION. BUT HIGH-
FATHER BADE US
GO WITH GREATEST
HASTE. HE SPOKE
AS IF THE FATE OF
ALL NEW GENESIS
WAS HUNG UPON
OUR SPEED.

"NEW GENESIS." LIKE ALL
THE OTHERS, YOU TALK
AS IF THE FLOATING
CITY WERE THE WORLD
ITSELF.

LOOK AROUND
YOU, LIGHTRAY.

THESE TUMBLING
ASTEROIDS ARE ALL
THAT NOW REMAIN OF
THE ONCE-GLORIOUS
PLANET OF YOUR
BIRTH. *

* DESTROYED IN THE "HUNGER
DOGS" GRAPHIC NOVEL BY JACK
KIRBY -- ANDY



TRUE ENOUGH,
BUT A WORLD IS
MORE THAN THE
ROCKS AND SOIL
THAT MAKE IT
UP, ORION.

NEW GENESIS IS
GONE, TO BE SURE.
BUT THE PEOPLE
SURVIVE INTACT,
AND SO LONG AS
THEY DO...

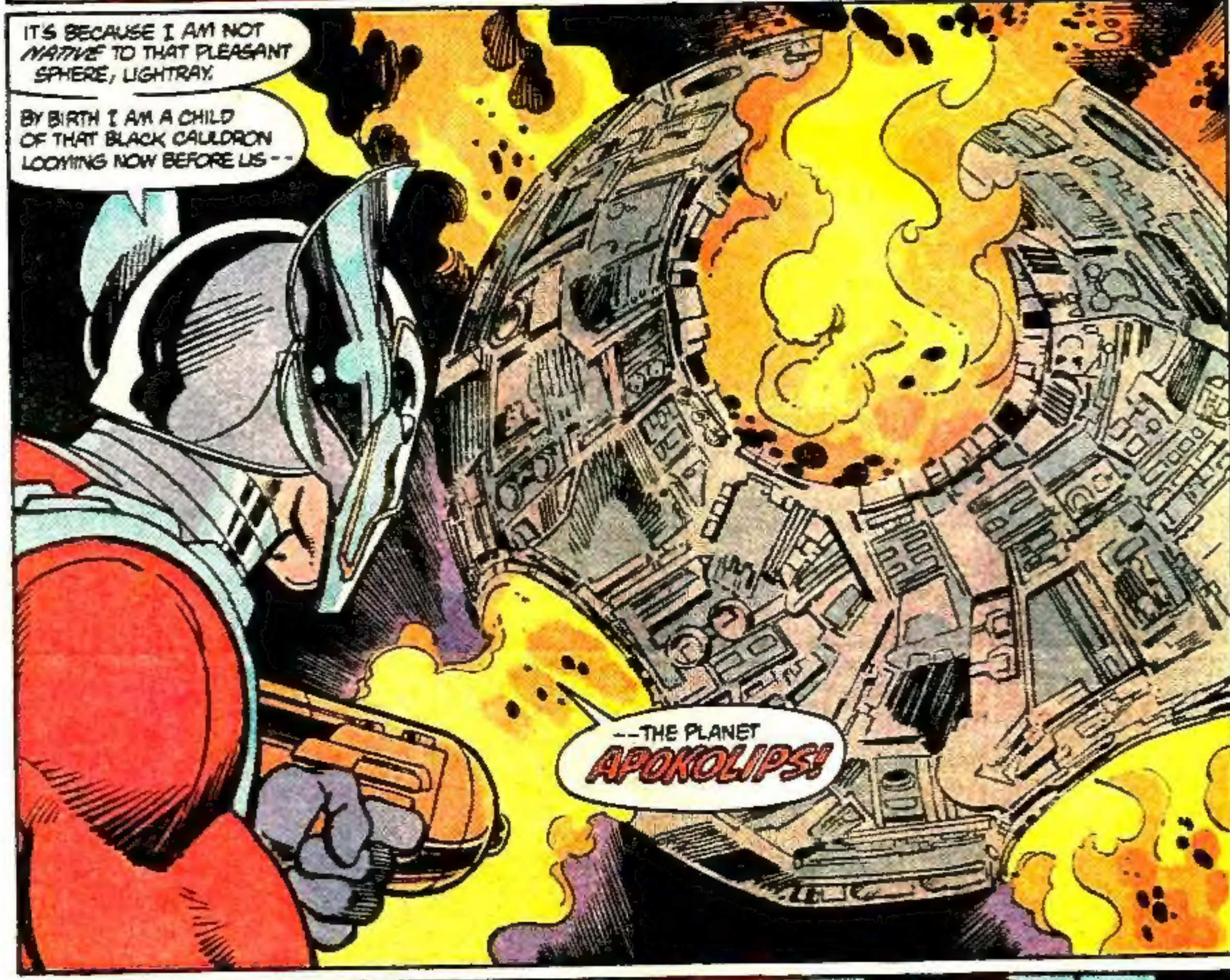
...SO WILL THE
SPIRIT OF THAT
NOBLE WORLD
ENDURE.

PERHAPS. PERHAPS.
YOUR HEART IS EVER
LIGHTER THAN MINE,
LIGHTRAY. YOUR BLOOD
SWIMS IN TRIBUTE
TO EACH NEW DAY.

WHILE MY HEART PUMPS FASTER
ONLY WHEN IT HEARS THE CALL
OF BATTLE. AND THAT'S A SIREN
SOUND I'VE HEARD TOO OFTEN
IN MY MANY YEARS.

YOURS AS A
HEAVY
BURDEN, ORION.

HEAVIER
BY FAR THAN ANY
OF THE OTHER
GODS OF NEW
GENESIS.



IT'S BECAUSE I AM NOT
NATIVE TO THAT PLEASANT
SPHERE, LIGHTRAY.

BY BIRTH I AM A CHILD
OF THAT BLACK CAULDRON
LOOMING NOW BEFORE US --

--THE PLANET
APOKOLIPS!



HOME OF DEADLY DARKNESS
WORLD OF CRUSHING
DARKNESS AND DESPAIR.

INTO THAT FIERY
MAW, HIGHFATHER SENDS
US ONCE AGAIN--AND
THIS TIME, ON A
MISSION WHICH
TRANSCENDS ALL
OTHERS!

TO SAVE
A FALLEN
HERO!

SUPERMAN VS THE NEW GODS!

THE CHAMPION!!



JOHN BYRNE - Storyteller
DICK GIORDANO - Embellisher
JOHN COSTANZA - Letterer
TOM ZIUKO - Colorist
ANDREW HELFER - Editor

* WARNING! READ NO FURTHER IF YOU HAVE NOT YET SEEN THE FIRST TWO CHAPTERS OF THIS SAGA, STILL ON SALE IN SUPERMAN #3 AND THE ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN #426-ANDY.



DO YOU WHINE, SAVIOR? DO YOU SNIVEL? YOU DISAPPOINT GRANNY.

GRANNY HAS TOLD YOU THAT YOU WILL SURVIVE THIS TESTING.

DO YOU NOT TRUST GRANNY?

I... TRUST... YOU.

BUT... THE PRESSURE...



THE PRESSURE IS NO MORE THAN YOU CAN BEAR, MY PRECIOUS ONE. GRANNY WOULD NOT HURT HER FAVORITE STUDENT.



AND YOU ARE GRANNY'S FAVORITE, SAVIOR. YOU ARE THE ONE WHO WILL SHINE AS THE PINNACLE OF GRANNY'S WORK!



FOR YOU ARE MORE THAN JUST A RUFFIAN TAKEN FROM THE MASSES OF ARMAGETTO. YOU ARE THE SON OF DARKSEID! NEVER FORGET THAT!

NOW--MORE PRESSURE!!



IS... THIS WISE, MY LORD?

THE AMNESIA THAT PUT SUPERMAN IN OUR POWER ALSO ROBS HIM OF HIS STRENGTH.

AND GRANNY GOODNESS WILL RESTORE IT.

OR DOES AMAZING GRACE QUESTION HER MASTER?



N-NO, GREAT DARKSEID!

NEVER!

NEVER!

PATHETIC CREATURE. YOUR CRINGING MANNER REMINDS ME OF YOUR BROTHER, GLORIOUS GODFREY.

A PITY THAT YOU DO NOT ALSO SHARE THE FULL EXTENT OF HIS MANIPULATING POWERS.



M-MY MASTER IS DISSATISFIED WITH MY WORK?

NO. YOU HAVE DONE WELL IN YOUR PART IN THIS, GIVEN THE HASTE WITH WHICH THE PLAN WAS MODIFIED.



FOR SEVERAL DAYS NOW I HAVE TASKED THE HEROES OF THE PLANET EARTH.

I HAVE TRAVERSSED THEIR GOLDEN, GLOWING LEGENDS. YOUR BROTHER, WITH HIS POWER TO SHAPE THE THOUGHTS OF HUMANS, HAS AIDED ME IN THIS.

WHEN I BROUGHT SUPERMAN TO APOCALIPS, IT WAS TO TEST HIS VAUNTED METTLE.

BUT HE ARRIVED IN A HUMAN GLAZE--AND SO, BECAUSE I WAS THEN OBSERVED BY THE BADLY AMUSED STRANGER, I PRETENDED NOT TO KNOW SUPERMAN FOR WHAT HE WAS.

INSTEAD, I SEIZED THE OPPORTUNITY TO TEST THE PHANTOM STRANGER'S AVOWED NEUTRALITY IN THIS GAME OF THE GODS.

I HURLED THE DISGUISED SUPERMAN FROM THE FORTRESS TOWER...

...OUT INTO THE SWARMING MASSES OF MY HUNGER DOGS.



AND WHILE WE WANDERED THROUGH THE DARK ALLEYS OF ARMASETTO, YOUR SHOCK TROOPS SEIZED ME FROM MY "HIDDEN" HEADQUARTERS.

YOUR PLAN WAS TO LURE SUPERMAN INTO THE OPEN BY FORCING HIM TO RESCUE ME. BUT I CONFESS, GREAT DARKSEID, I FEARED YOUR PLANS HAD CHANGED TO INCLUDE MY DEATH!



HOW UNTRUSTING YOU ARE, CHILD. I SET YOU IN THE MIDST OF THE "LOWLIES" TO STIR THEIR HEARTS AND RAISE THEIR SPIRITS.

SO THAT, AT THE PROPER TIME, THEY COULD BE CRUSHED AS A REMINDER OF MY POWER.

AND YOU SAW SUPERMAN AS YET ANOTHER ELEMENT YOU COULD SEED INTO THIS SCHEME.



QUITE SO, ESPECIALLY AFTER A PLUNGE INTO THE RAGING FIRE-FITS ROBBED HIM OF HIS MEMORY--

--AND, CURIOUSLY, HIS SUPERHUMAN POWERS!



EVEN WITHOUT THOSE POWERS, HE WAS A NOBLE HEART, O' DARKSEID.

THE BRIEF REBELLION HE LED, SMASHED THROUGH YOUR GUARDS LIKE THEY WERE NAUGHT BUT RAG DOLLS!



ONLY BECAUSE
I ALLOWED
THEM TO DO
SO.

YOU SPEAK STRANGELY,
WOMAN. HAS THIS HANDSOME
STRANGER FOUND A SOFT
SPOT IN YOUR HEART?

N-N-NO! NO,
GREAT
DARKSEID! MY
HEART AND
SOUL EVER
BELONG TO
YOU!



BE SURE
YOU REMEMBER
THAT.

YES, SENTRY?
WHAT IS YOUR
REPORT?

HE—HE SENGED MY
PRESENCE EVEN BEFORE
I ENTERED! GREAT IS
THE POWER OF
DARKSEID!

MY LORD, ORION AND
LASHTRAY HAVE BEEN
SIGHTED IN THE SKIES
ABOVE APOKOLIPS!



ORION...YES.
HIS COMING
WAS NOT UN-
ANTICIPATED.

MEDDLING HIGHFATHER
WILL DOUBTLESS HAVE
LEARNED OF SUPERMAN'S
PLIGHT.

PREPARE
THE GUARD!

AT ONCE,
MY LORD!

THE TIME HAS
COME FOR YOU
TO SURRENDER
YOUR CHARGE
TO ME, GRANNY.

BUT... BUT HE IS
NOT PROPERLY
PREPARED, GREAT
DARKSEID. I NEED
MORE TIME WITH
HIM.

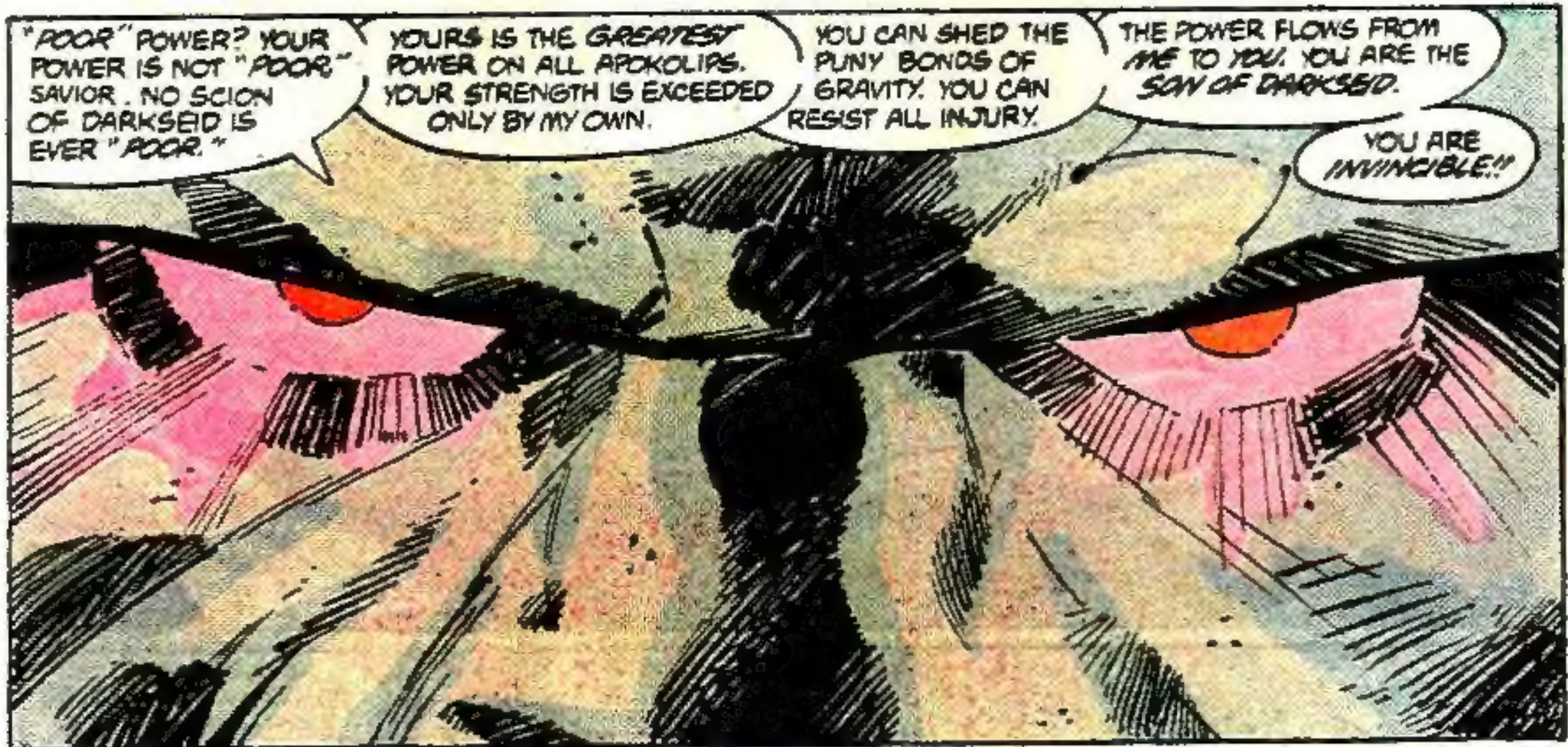


TIME IS SOMETHING
EVEN WE GODS DO
NOT POSSESS IN GREAT
ABUNDANCE, GRANNY.

ARE YOU READY
TO FIGHT FOR
ME, SAVIOR?

ALWAYS,
FATHER.

MY POOR
POWER IS YOURS
TO COMMAND!



"POOR" POWER? YOUR POWER IS NOT "POOR" SAVIOR. NO SCION OF DARKSEID IS EVER "POOR."

YOURS IS THE GREATEST POWER ON ALL APOKOLIPS. YOUR STRENGTH IS EXCEEDED ONLY BY MY OWN.

YOU CAN SHED THE PUNY BONDS OF GRAVITY. YOU CAN RESIST ALL INJURY.

THE POWER FLOWS FROM ME TO YOU. YOU ARE THE SON OF DARKSEID.

YOU ARE INVINCIBLE!!



YES... YES!!

I FEEL THE POWER. I FEEL THE STRENGTH.

IT SINGS IN MY SINEWS!

POWER SUCH AS NO MAN HAS EVER KNOWN!



I AM RENEWED! I AM REBORN!!

THEN GO, SAVIOR.

YOUR ENEMIES ARE WAITING, IN THE SKIES ABOVE OUR WORLD.

SMITE THEM! DESTROY THEM!



YES!

YES!!

FOR THE GLORY OF DARKSEID...

NOW STRIKES THE SAVIOR!!

GREAT DARKSEID-- I AM ~~CONFUSED~~. FOR MANY HOURS I HAVE LABORED TO RESTORE SUPERMAN'S POWERS.

NOW YOU RETURN THEM WITH A GLANCE. WHY DID YOU NOT DO SO BEFORE?

I WAITED NOT WITHOUT GOOD REASON, GRANNY.

WHAT I HAVE DONE IS DANGEROUS.

SUPERMAN'S POWERS REQUIRE HIS FULL, ACTIVE BRAIN TO ~~APPLY~~ THEM. AND WITH HIS MIND CLOUDED BY AMNESIA...

...HE WAS LIKE A POWERFUL VEHICLE OF WAR, CAPABLE OF ~~SMASHING~~ A CITY, BUT USELESS WITHOUT A SKILLED OPERATOR AT THE CONTROLS.

NOW I HAVE CREATED IN HIS MIND THE ILLUSION THAT HIS POWERS COME FROM ME. THAT ALL HE DOES, HE DOES BECAUSE HE IS THE SON OF DARKSEID.

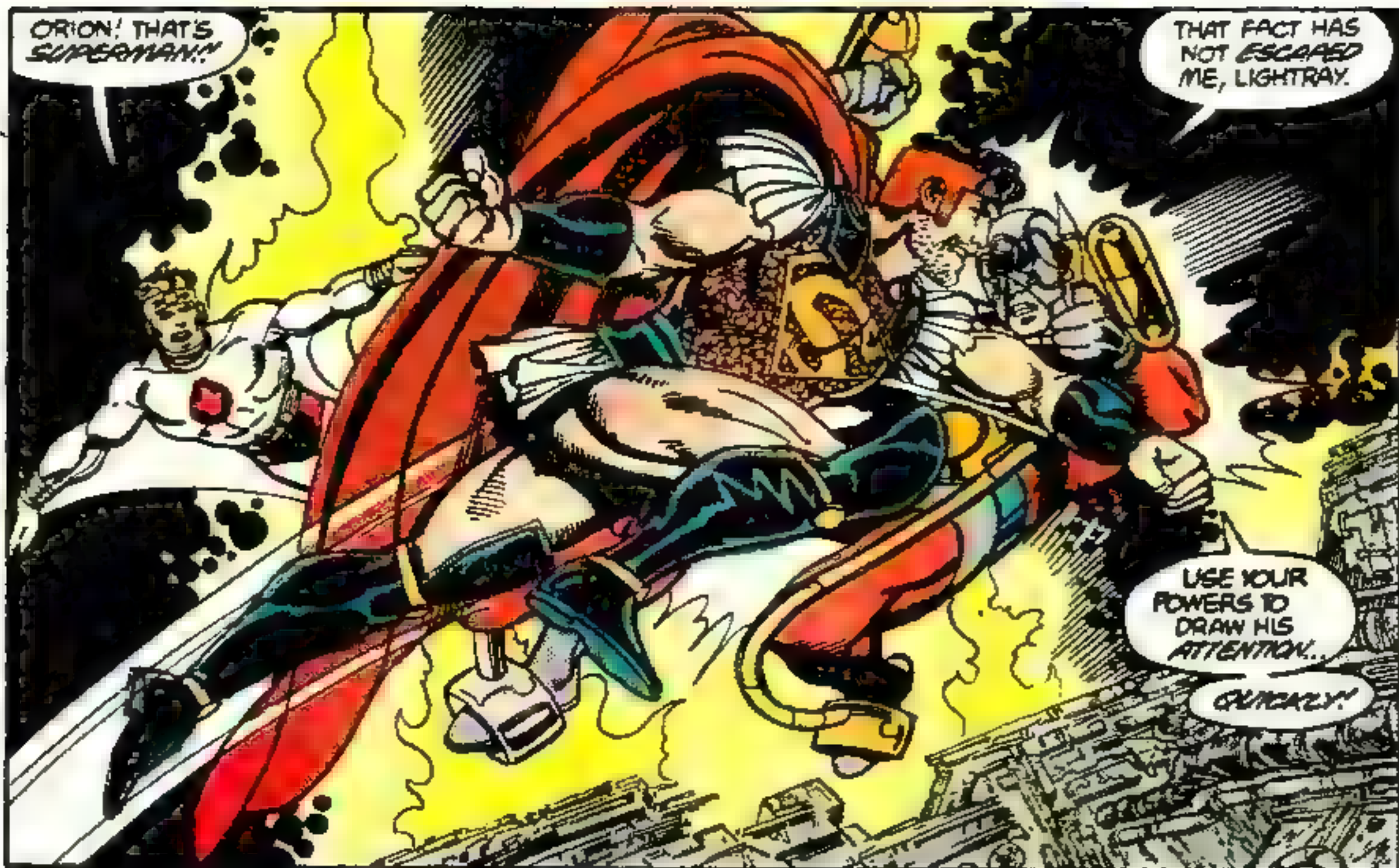
AND THIS COULD PROVE OUR UNDWING. FOR, AS YOU WELL KNOW...

...IT IS THE TRUE SON OF DARKSEID WHO WAITS NOW IN THE SKY ABOVE US...

ORION, LOOK! A FLYING FIGURE HURTLES TOWARDS US. IS IT ONE OF DARKSEID'S ~~AAAA~~-DEMONS?

UNFEN!!

I THINK NOT, LIGHTRAY.

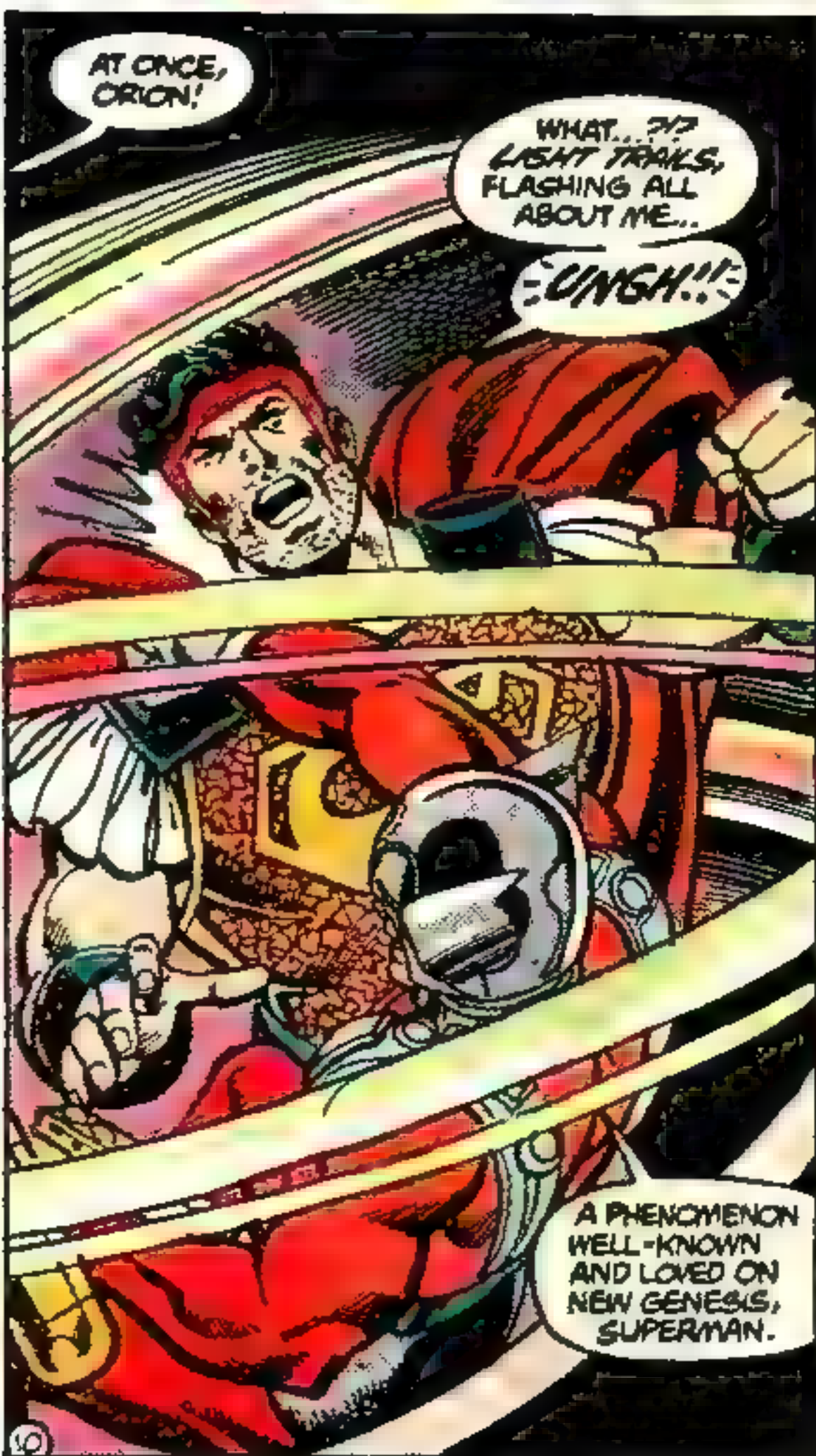


ORION! THAT'S SUPERMAN!!

THAT FACT HAS NOT ESCAPED ME, LIGHTRAY.

USE YOUR POWERS TO DRAW HIS ATTENTION...

QUICKLY!!

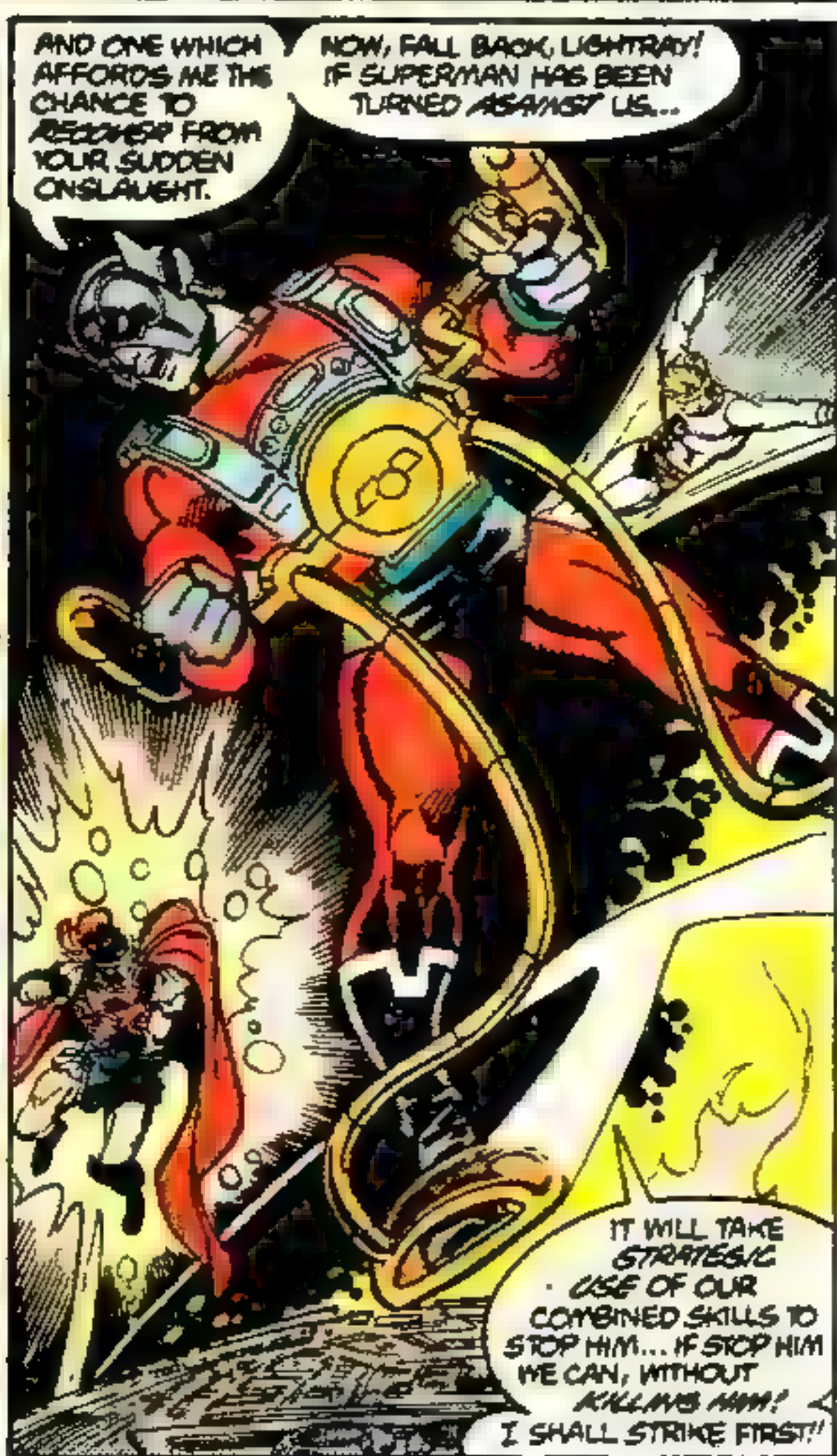


AT ONCE, ORION!

WHAT...??
LIGHT TRAILS,
FLASHING ALL
ABOUT ME...

WUNGH!!!

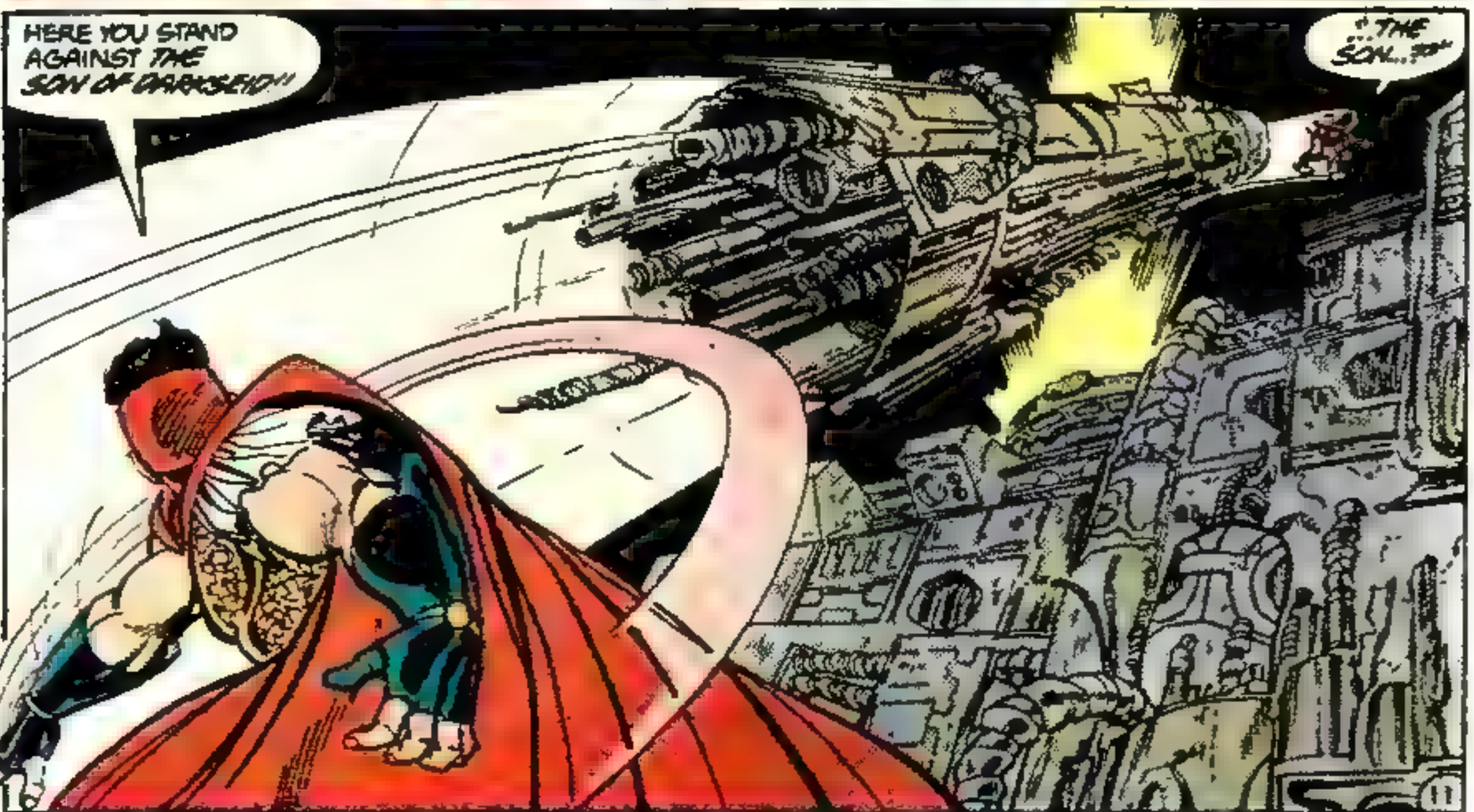
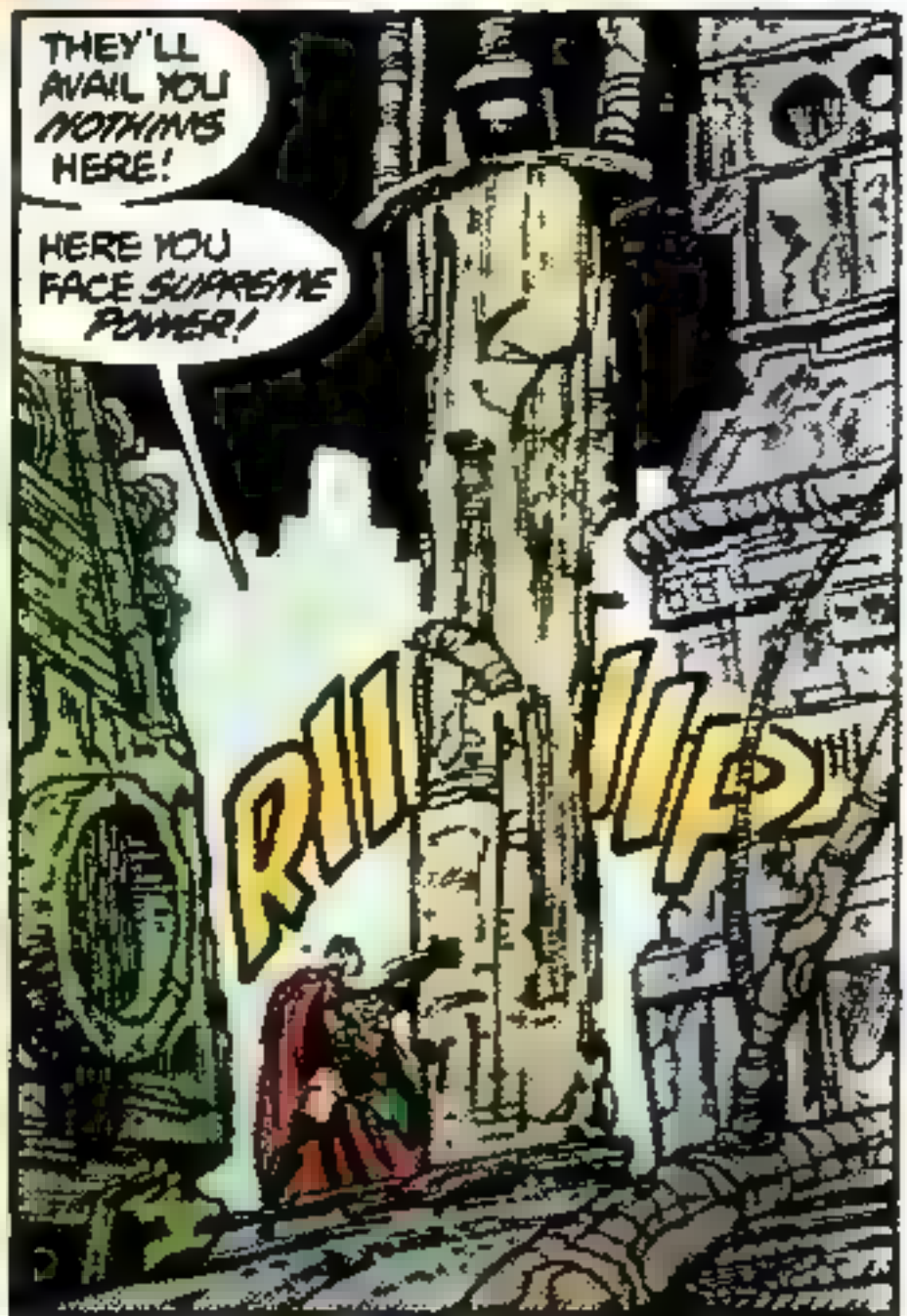
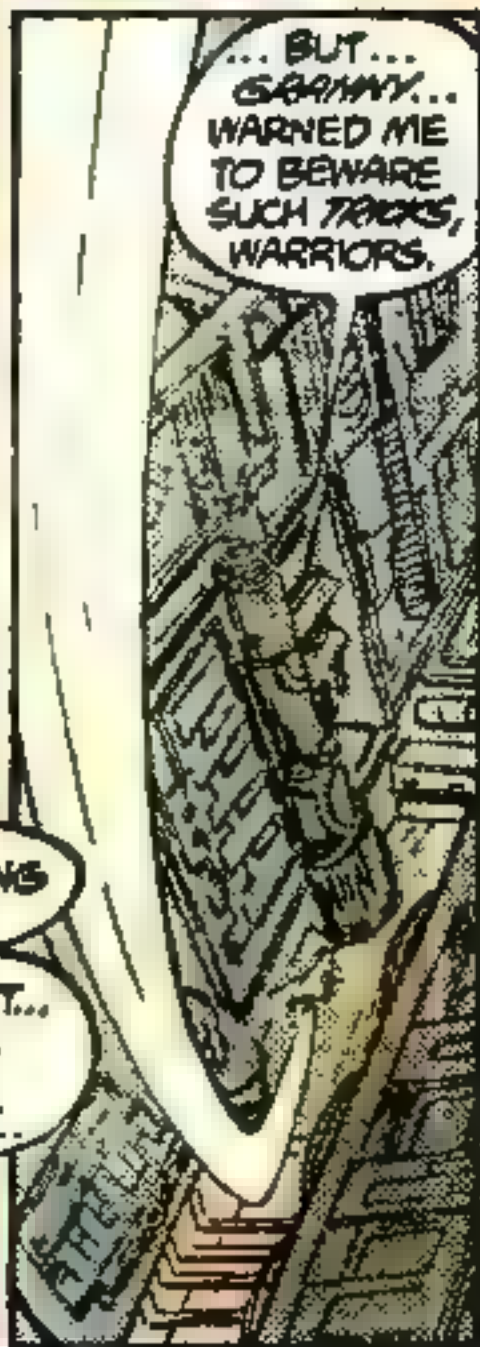
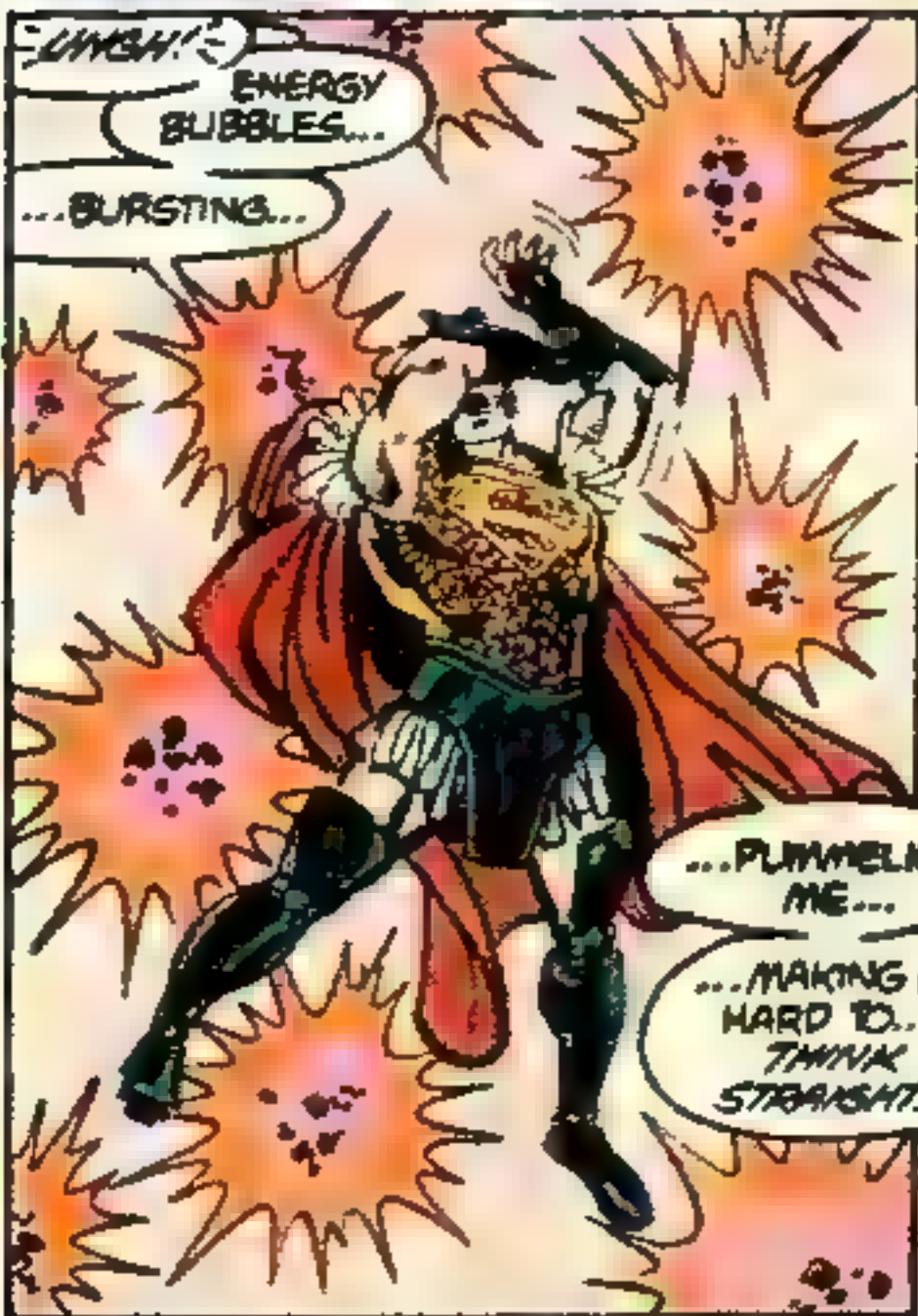
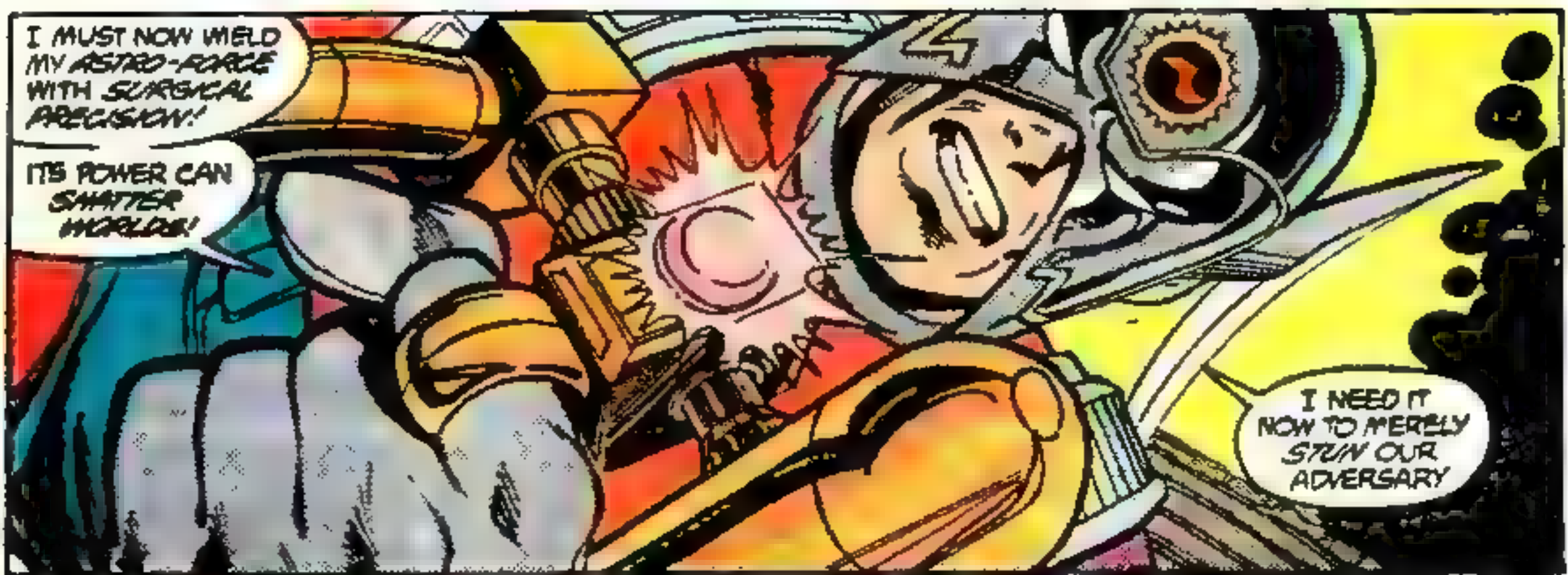
A PHENOMENON
WELL-KNOWN
AND LOVED ON
NEW GENESIS,
SUPERMAN.

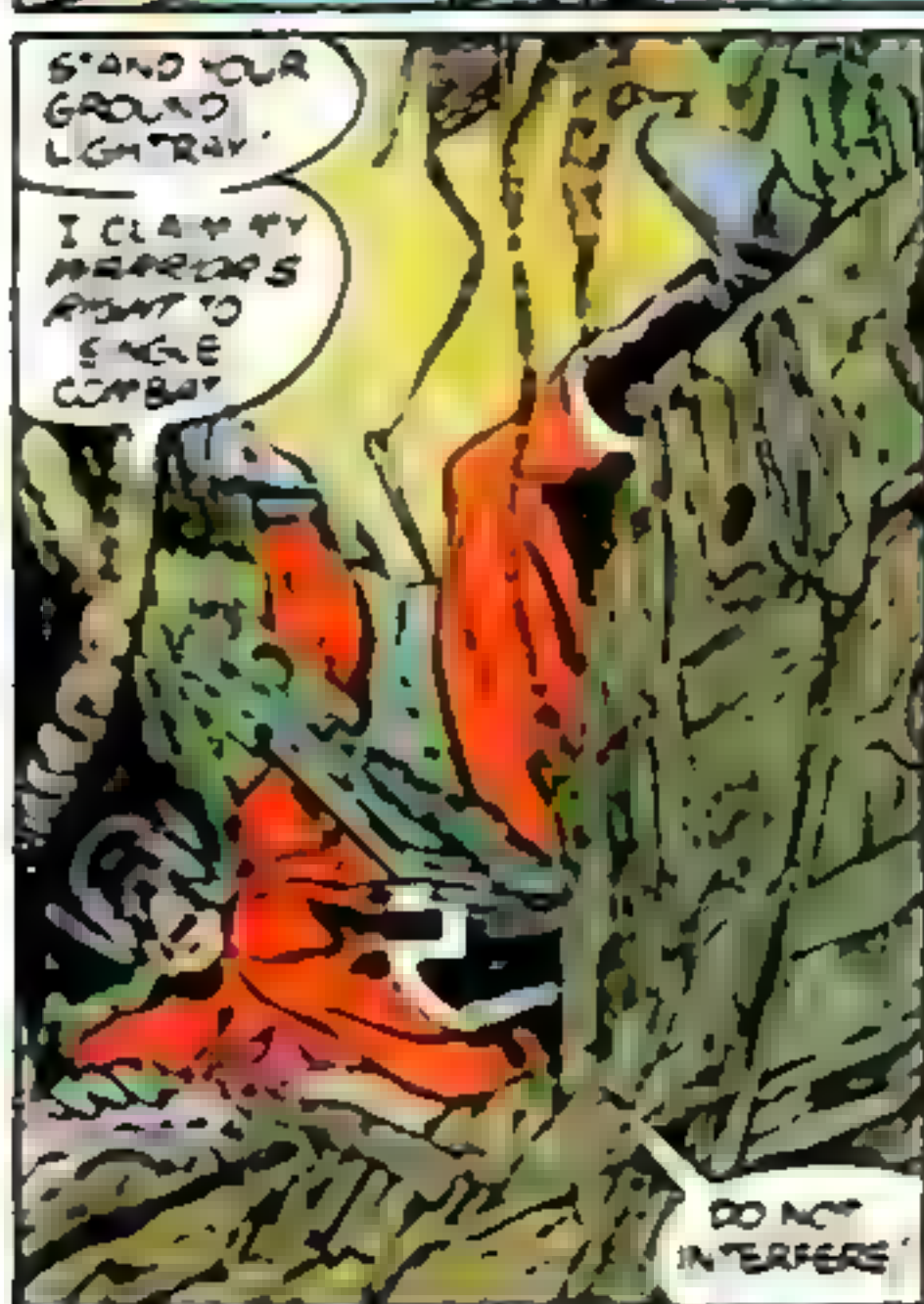


AND ONE WHICH
AFFORDS ME THE
CHANCE TO
RECOVER FROM
YOUR SUDDEN
ONSLAUGHT.

NOW, FALL BACK, LIGHTRAY!
IF SUPERMAN HAS BEEN
TURNED AGAINST US...

IT WILL TAKE
STRATEGIC
USE OF OUR
COMBINED SKILLS TO
STOP HIM... IF STOP HIM
WE CAN, WITHOUT
KILLING HIM!
I SHALL STRIKE FIRST!!







WAIT... PERHAPS
THAT IS
THE KEY

DARKSEID HAS
SOMEONE COMING
THIS EARLY HE IS
A CHILD OF
ACCURSED



THAT MAY PLACE
WITHIN MY GRASP
THE WAY BY
WHICH HE MIGHT
BE SHOWN THE
TRUTH

WHAM!



SO YOU CLAIM AFFILIATION
WITH THE BLACK LORD OF
THIS ACCURSED WORLD
DO YOU?



THEN IT IS TIME YOU
LEARNED THE FULL WEIGHT
OF THAT BURDEN YOU SO
EAGERLY ACCEPT



TIME YOU LEARNED WHAT IT
TRULY MEANS TO BE A
SON OF DARKSEID

ORION EXPOSES HIS
TRUE FACE TO
SUPERMAN.

THERE ARE FEW
EVEN ON GENESIS
WHO'VE SEEN THAT
GRIM VISAGE.

HE MUST BE
HOPING THE SHOCK
OF BEING
CONFRONTED BY
THE FACT OF
DARKSEID'S REAL
SON WILL BRING
SUPERMAN BACK
TO HIS...

WHAT'S
THAT...??

A BATTLEFIELD.

THE BROKEN CARCASSES OF
DARKSEID'S SHOCK-TROOPERS
LIE SIDE-BY-SIDE WITH THOSE
OF THE HUNGER DOGS.

WHAT HAS HAPPENED
HERE? DID THE "LOWLIES"
OF ARHAGETTO RISE UP
AGAINST THEIR CRUEL
MASTERS?

WHO COULD HAVE
SLAYED THEM
TO SUCH FOLLY?

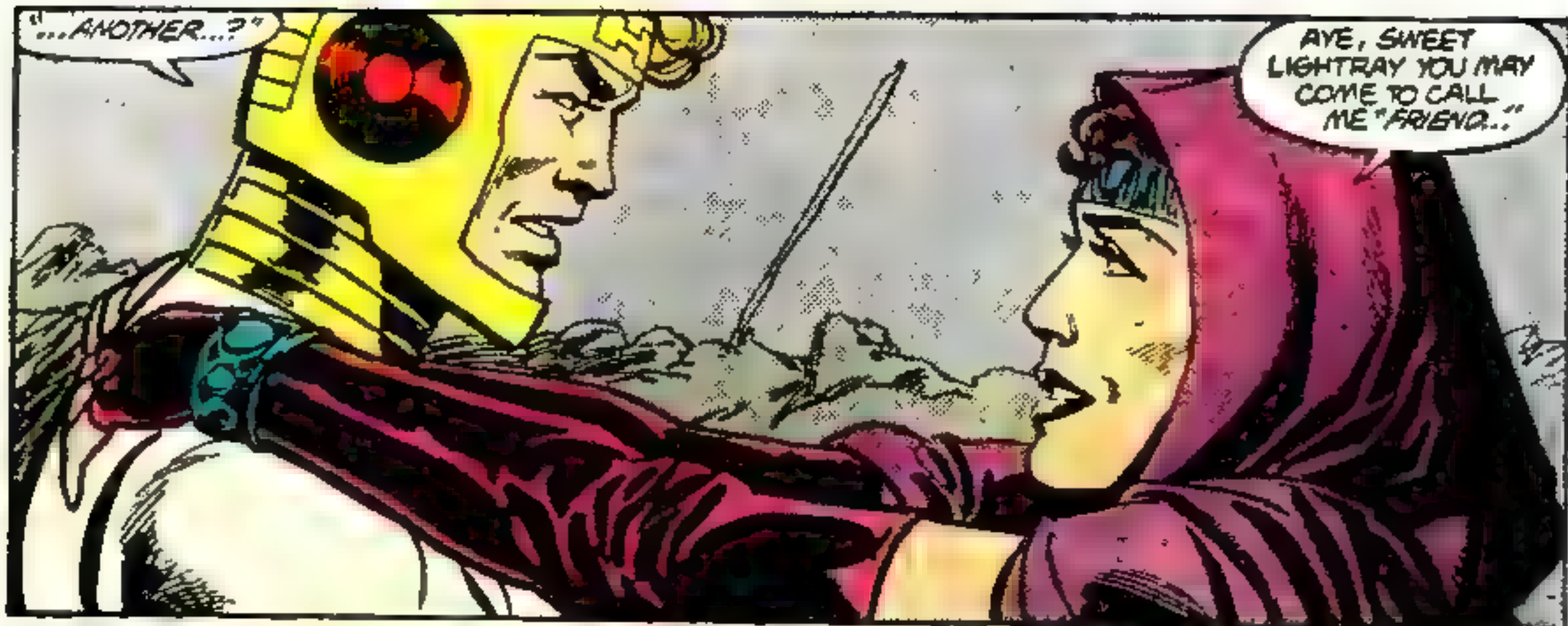
YOU LOOK
SURPRISED,
PRETTY ONE.

HAVE YOU
NEVER SEEN THE
FACE OF WAR?

WHO...??

IN THESE PARTS, I AM
SOMETIMES CALLED
AMAZING GRACE,
LIGHTRAY.

YOU MAY COME
TO KNOW ME
BY ANOTHER
NAME.



"...ANOTHER...?"

AYE, SWEET
LIGHTRAY YOU MAY
COME TO CALL
ME "FRIEND..."

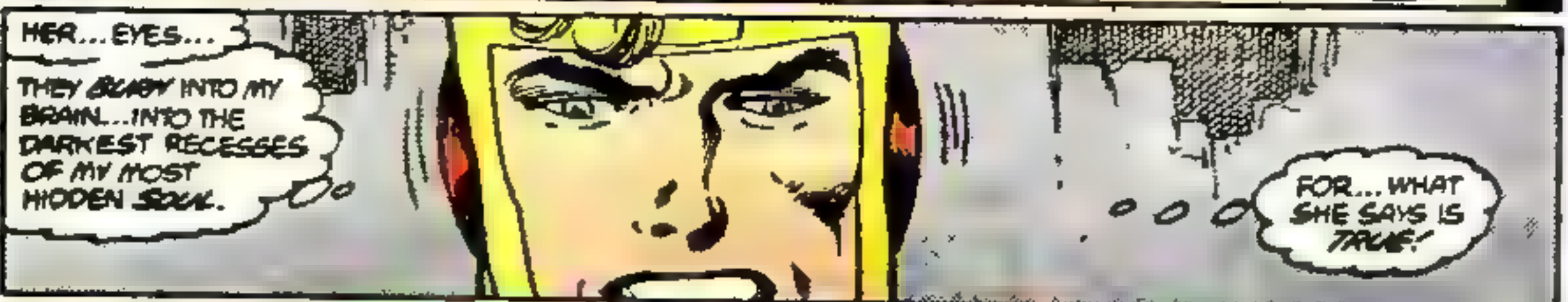


OR BETTER
STILL...

"BELOVED."

FOR AM I
NOT DESIRABLE,
LIGHTRAY?

DO YOU NOT
SEE IN ME THE
FACE AND FORM
OF EVERY WOMAN
YOU HAVE WALKED
WITH IN YOUR
DREAMS?



HER... EYES...

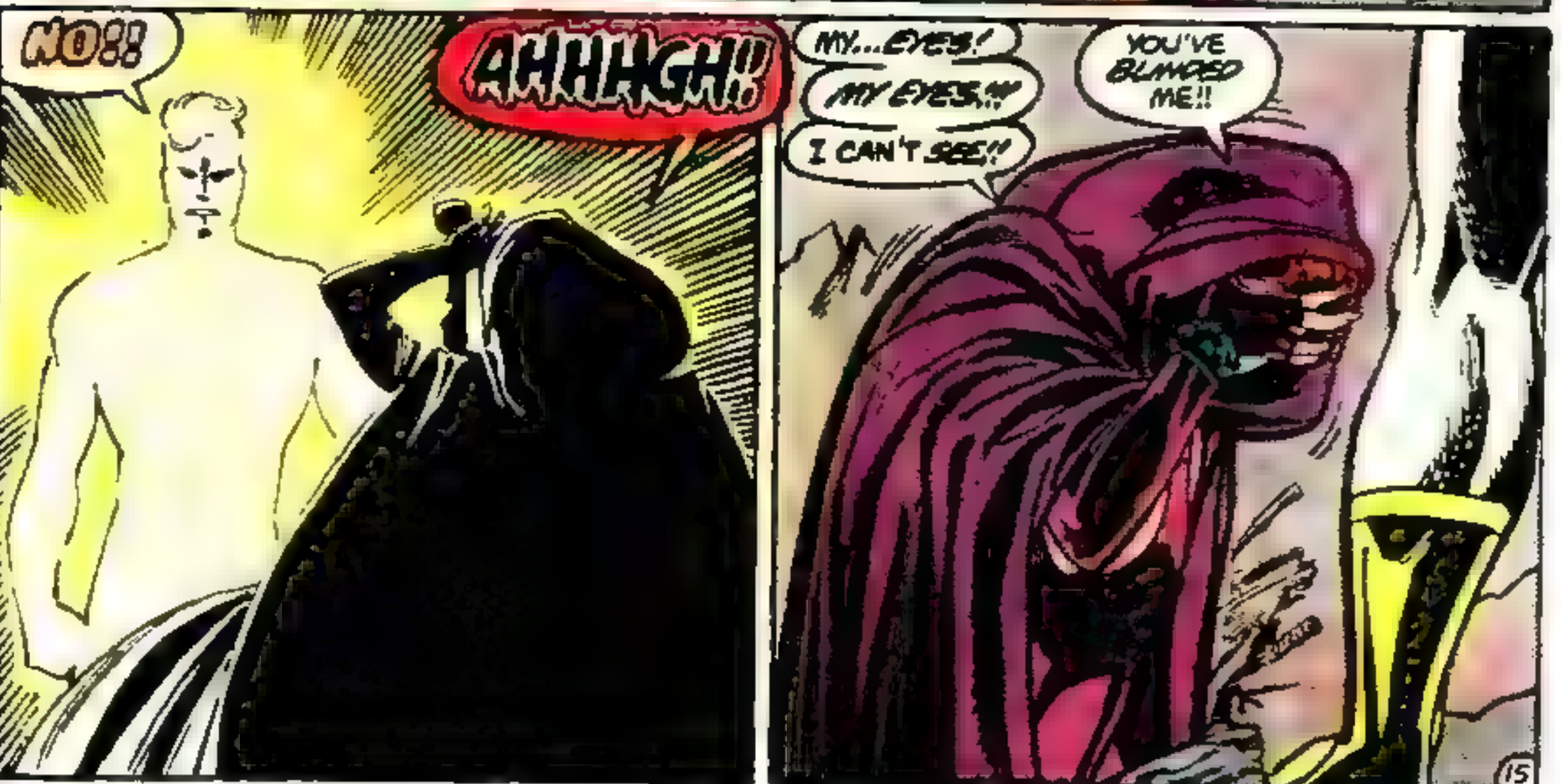
THEY GLIDED INTO MY
BRAIN... INTO THE
DARKEST RECESSES
OF MY MOST
HIDDEN SOUL.

FOR... WHAT
SHE SAYS IS
TRUE!



SURRENDER YOURSELF
TO ME, LIGHTRAY. LET ME
SHOW TO YOU THE DARK
BEAUTY OF APOHOLIPS.

LET ME
SET YOU
FREE...



NO!!

AAAAAGH!!

MY... EYES!

MY EYES!!

I CAN'T SEE!!

YOU'VE
BLINDED
ME!!

ONLY A TEMPORARY EFFECT, TEMPTRESS WHEN DARKSEID LEARNS OF YOUR FAILURE TO SEDUCE ME, HIS DEALINGS WITH YOU WILL DOUBTLESS BE OF A MORE PERMANENT KIND.

ORION! THERE HAS BEEN A GREAT SLAUGHTER HERE!

I KNOW, LIGHTRAY MOTHER BOX* HAS ALREADY OPENED SUPERMAN'S MIND TO ME HE LEAD THE HUNGER DOGS --

--AND THEN BETRAYED THEM.

* MOTHER BOX--THE FABULOUS LIVING COMPUTER OF THE NEW GODS. FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE WW'S WW #15 --A H

S-SUPERMAN-- BETRAYED THEM??

NOT WILLINGLY A MOMENT, LIGHTRAY

THE GENTLE SOOTHINGS OF MOTHER BOX HAS BROUGHT A BRIEF MOMENT OF PEACE TO THIS HERO'S TROUBLED HEART AND MIND.

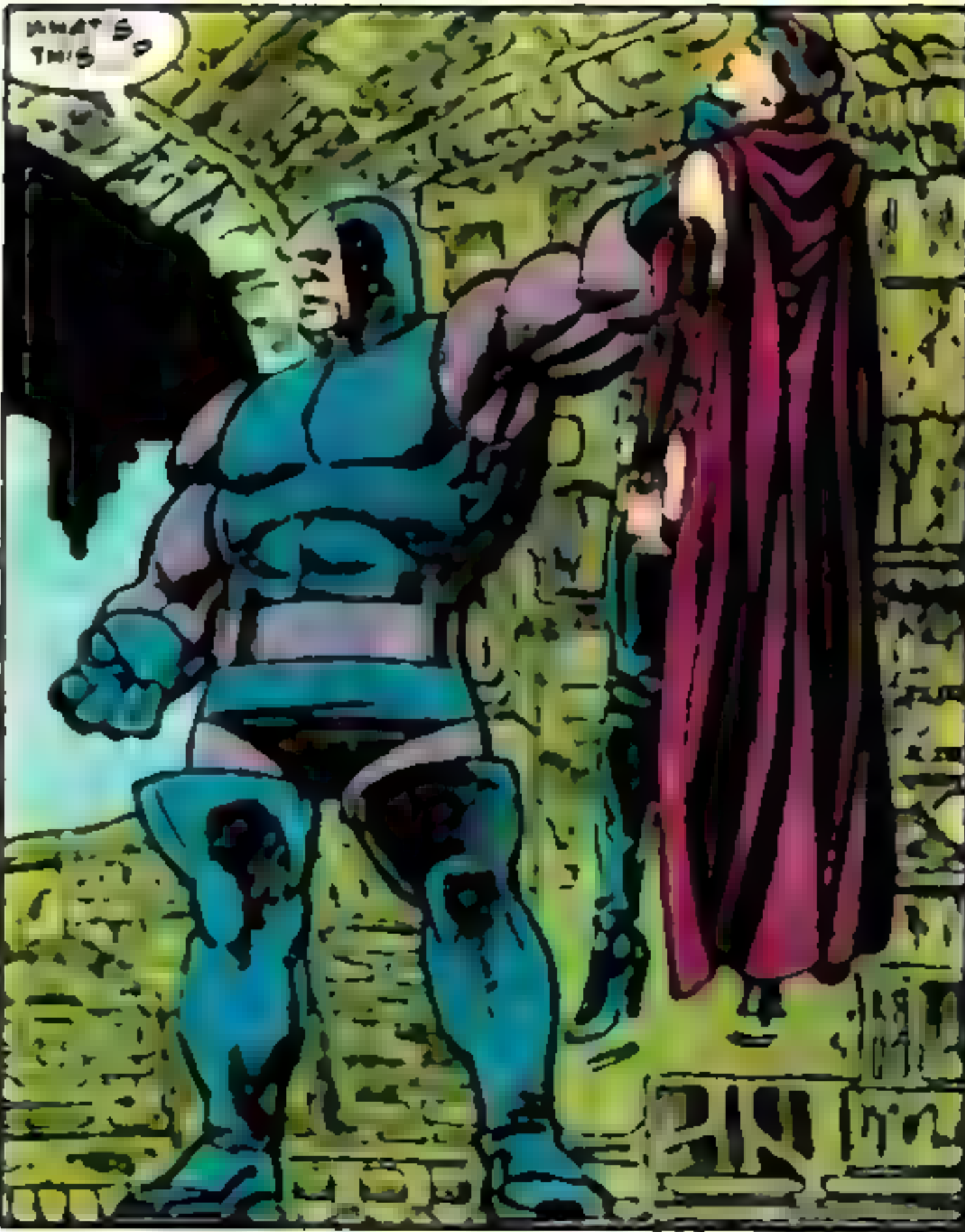
PING
PING
PING
PING
PING

PING
PING
PING

NOW SHE IS REWEAVING THE BROKEN FABRIC OF HIS COSTUME AND HIS MIND. HIS AMNESIA IS STRIPPED AWAY AND WITH IT, THE LIES IMPLANTED IN HIS MEMORY BY...

PING
PING
PING
PING





WHAT IS THIS?



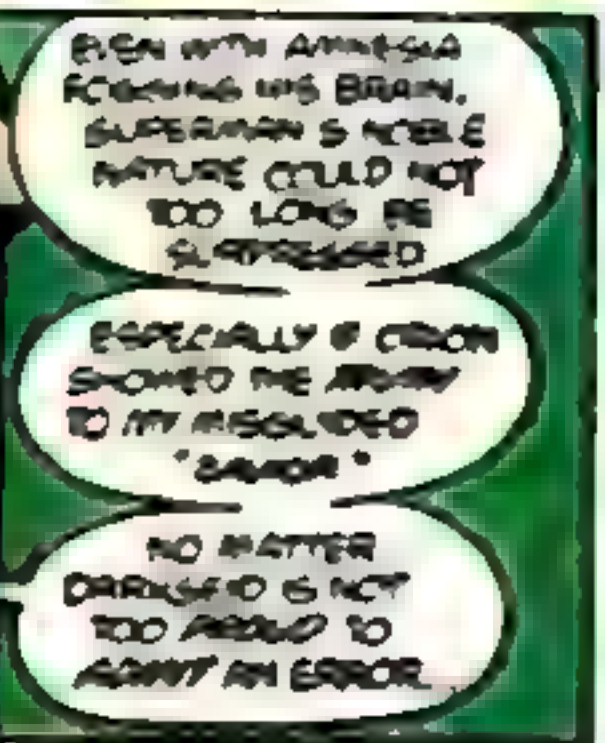
SO... SUPERMAN IT SEEMS IS AWARE OF MY TANGLED WEB

EVEN FROM THIS DISTANCE, I SENSE THE PASSION WITH WHICH HIS ALLEN BLOOD HE KNOWS NOW ALL I VS TREATED HIM



MY PLAN HAS GONE AWRY

PERHAPS IN THIS I OVERREACHED MYSELF PERHAPS IT WAS A MISTAKE, SEEKING TO INJECT THIS ARMY OF STEEL IN MY SMALL, SOMEONE TO FURTHER CALM THE SPIRITS OF MY HUNGER DOGS.



EVEN WITH ANNESSIA FORGING HIS BRAIN, SUPERMAN'S NOBLE NATURE COULD NOT TOO LONG BE SUPPRESSED

ESPECIALLY IF CROWN SHOWED THE ARMY TO MY MISGUIDED "SARON"

NO MATTER DARKSEID IS NOT TOO PROUD TO ADMIT AN ERROR.



CORRECT IT!

DARKSEID!!

SUPERMAN!!



YES, AND
I'VE BROUGHT
YOU A LITTLE
PRESENT!

NO!



WELL, WELL!

STILL WITH US,
DARKSEID? I DON'T
KNOW IF I REALLY
EXPECTED YOU TO
SURVIVE THAT
ONE.

OF COURSE... I
SURVIVE... FOOL. MY
BODY... COULD NOT
CONTAIN THE OMEGA
FORCE... IF IT COULD
NOT... RESIST IT.

BUT YOU
HAVE HURT ME,
SUPERMAN.



PERHAPS YOU'LL
FIND SOME SMALL
COMFORT IN THAT
FACT...



...IN
YOUR
GRAVE!!



THE OMEGA FORCE IS
SPENT. IT WILL TAKE TIME
TO RETURN TO FULL
POTENCY.

BUT THERE ARE
OTHER THINGS
IT CAN STILL
DO.



GNAHHGH!!

I CAN ATTUNE THE
FREQUENCY OF MY
ENERGY BLASTS TO
YOUR PRECISE MOLECULAR
STRUCTURE,
SUPERMAN.



HERE IS
AGONY,
HERO.

HERE IS
PAIN
SUCH AS
YOU HAVE
NEVER
KNOWN.

ANGUISH
THAT WILL
MAKE YOU
BEG...

...PLEAD FOR
THE SWEET
RELEASE OF
DEATH!

DARKSEID...

